The heads of the men are not shaven, but the hair is 302
cropped close to the skull by the barber, a tonsure re-
sembling that of a European or American army recruit. The
face is shaven clean, save the moustache which has great
social significance as a sign of masculinity. A man with- 302
out some sort of stubble on his upper lip is in danger of 831
being reputed "not quite a man" among both the men and,
more injurious to vanity, the women. Indeed, the moustache,
through an understandable cultural process, has come to be
a necessary attribute of virile beauty, and a person with
a luxuriant growth, though destitute of other physical
qualities, may be regarded as handsome by the women. Even
officials and officers, who often wear their hair long,
do not shave the upper lip. A full beard is worn by only 302
a few elderly men in the town, and is interpreted as a
sign of both age and piety. Never, in recent years, is
the beard, when white or gray, stained with henna, and
this usage, ordinary in southern Iraq, is vilified as [196]
"Persian" and "Shiite" with the greatest of scorn. Towns-
men are also supposed to shave the hair under the arms
and around the genitals, although it is again difficult to
say to what extent the custom is followed, for it is a [934]
great disgrace for a man to be seen naked by others. Ex-
cept for the cologne of the barber, men do not use
cosmetics or perfumes. In this connection, however, one 517
might mention the usage, in spring, of inhaling the 924
fragrance of cut blossoms. Characteristically, a host 574

of a college or university education and the relative degree of Westernization. The officials and officers are all graduates of colleges or academies, either in Iraq or abroad, where many usages of Western civilization are often literally enforced on them by their fellow students. It would be difficult to describe fully the details of this influence, but it may be summed up in what, with certain reservations and qualifications, they consider to be the dress, mannerisms, and thought of a Western gentleman. Thus they wear European clothing, indulge in gaming and drinking (which, one might note, despite Islam, are by no means strangers to the region of the Middle East, save that in this case specifically European forms are encountered), and, in general, try to comport themselves in their work and in masculine society as their models abroad. There are a large number of reservations, a few of which may be enumerated here. The attitude of an Arab official or officer toward his womenfolk, in a rural setting, is, if anything, more stringent than that of the local aristocrats. None of the officials would consider appearing before other males naked[1] or "indecently" clothed, and almost all consider European toilet habits filthy in the extreme, water being thought far more hygenic than tissue. A large part of the passion for Westernization stems from a sincere desire, as they envisage it, to better their country, while in others it amounts to pure snobbery. In the latter category, one can often hear officials, speaking

[1] [should read: naked. —Analyst]

agreed with them and went beyond them in the estimation of her worth, only the sale of all my family's property could realize their demand. One of them was kind enough to take me aside and to explain that there was a substantial difference between the documentary amount, publicized to the townspeople, and that which must actually be paid." It is perhaps for this reason that the muqeddam, the amount "paid" at the time of the wedding, is a much larger proportion of the dowry than the mu'akhar, that which must be forthcoming in divorce, the former representing in part the social fiction and the latter a more realistic economic appraisal. Nevertheless, the dowry functions strongly as an argument against heedless separations, and few men, having invested a substantial part of their own or their relatives' capital in a match, will undertake divorce lightly. As recorded above, many persons use unusual monetary gains to give their wives jewelry of precious metal, a matter of pleasure for the lady and, at the same time, further insurance against divorce or financial catastrophe.

583 554 [586] [301] [593] [454]

To approach the Kurdish kinship system, it is necessary to deal with certain other aspects of marriage, the first of which is incest. Unlawful intercourse or marriage between certain relatives is also governed by the religious law of Islam, and one cannot with confidence adduce anything from contemporary Kurdish society which will provide a functional or final explanation of the specific determinants of these prescriptions. There is

582 834

no reason to believe, however, that such early prohibitions 582
differed too greatly from those formulated by the Prophet. 834
Specifically, it is forbidden for persons to marry their grandparents, parents, the brothers and sisters of their parents, and their own brothers and sisters. Further, noting that polygyny is permitted, a man is prohibited from [595]
having two sisters as his wives. Only if one sister dies, [587]
is he permitted to wed the survivor. Finally, an infant whose mother cannot feed him is often given to a wet-nurse, 582
and this person, no matter what her status (in Rowanduz 608
she is typically a villager) becomes his "mother." In later life he is under the same restrictions toward her and her kindred as he is toward his own mother, for example, he can never marry her daughter. The townspeople of Rowanduz provided rationalizations for some of these matters, and they are subtended here with little comment. The rule that a man could not be married to two sisters simultaneously was explained by the usage that a husband habitually addressed his parents-in-law as "father" and [601]
"mother," his brother-in-law as "brother," and his sister- [606]
in-law as "sister," although, as will be seen, there are [607]
also separate terms for relatives by marriage. A man cannot take the sister of his wife as a second bride, it was said, because it was as if she were his real "sister," as he called her. In Kurdistan descent is commonly dis- 611
cussed in two ways, through the blood (khwa) of the parents and through the milk (shir) of the mother. Great [853]

importance is attached to nursing, and the ultimate curse of a mother toward her offspring, the rarest of events, is the wish that her "milk should never have been a misfortune in his mouth." It is forbidden for children who have been nursed at the same breast to marry and for this reason a youth can never wed his foster-sister, the daughter of his wet-nurse. It must be noted that in selecting a wet nurse, one with whose daughter an advantageous marriage might be subsequently arranged is never sought, but rather some woman of the lower classes or of the villages. Neither of these explanations, nor a third, that of descent through "blood," can be expanded to explain the prohibition of marriage between two generations. To amplify this statement, one cannot marry his sister "because they have been nursed at the same breast," but the rationale does not apply to an aunt who is similarly forbidden.

Islamic law permits a man to take four wives if he so chooses. This, however, in its full realization presents many more obstacles than are immediately apparent. First, he must pay separate dowries for each spouse, and the dowry, as has been seen, as well as the feeding, clothing, and maintenance, of a single wife is not an inexpensive undertaking. Polygyny, then, is more often than not the prerogative of the extremely wealthy. At the same time, the threat to connubial happiness in maintaining two or more wives under the same roof is widely recognized in the Middle East, and there are many examples, in literature and in popular speech, of the intense jealousy developed in such a situation

ill-treatment than one of lesser status. 593

The department required of a man toward his relatives by marriage depends to some extent on whether or not the two families are related. If, for example, he has married the daughter of his father's brother, he is much more intimate with his parents-in-law and their other children. In other cases, he must behave with greater reserve, and, if he accompanies his wife on a visit to her parental home, does not enjoy absolute freedom of the house. As noted above, he may address his relatives by marriage by the terms he uses for his own parents, brothers, and sisters. Similarly, a woman who has wed into a strange mal is initially placed at some disadvantage, although, of course, she may circulate freely in the household. She becomes much more intimate with her husband's relatives than he with hers. In time, particularly after the birth of her first son, a wife can achieve a position of dominance in her husband's family. Through her influence, a man is often called upon to alleviate his relatives by marriage if they are in distress and to take them into his own house if orphaned. 606 607

The presence of servants in the wealthier households and the manner in which they regard themselves as members of the family has already been noticed. The household servants may be married or unmarried, but there must never be any question of sexual relations between them and their employers. A woman, save in the occasional case of a 357 592 [834] 589 357

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

keep their wives in exclusion, and this practice has quite recently sprung up being due to Turkish influence ..."[26]. And Edmonds writes: "Many travellers before 1914 recorded their impression that Kurdish women enjoyed in general a good deal more freedom than their Arab, Turkish and Persian sisters"[27]. In regard to marriage and the polygyni sanctioned by the Coran and known in other Muslim areas, Soane[28] declares that: "The Kurd from north to south is monogamous" adding:[29] "free intercourse between the sexes is the rule, and the result is a large number of love marriages ...".

It is fact that the individual Kurdish woman of the upper class has, in situations difficult for the Kurdish people, sprung into the limelight, which seems incompatible with the view adopted concerning woman's restricted possibilities of action in Muslim areas, but may possibly be due to the prominent position of their families[30]. Khanem Osman Pasha, Lady Adila of Halabja[31] of the Ardalan Vazir family, married to Osman Pasha of the Begzada family, is the best known case. Her husband, towards the end of the Turkish period, was made the *qā'im maqām* in Halabja. Even whilst he was alive all effective authority passed to his wife. In 1910 Major Soane lived as a servant with her son, Tahir Beg, after Soane had accepted Islam in 1906 and, under the name of Mirza Ghulam Hussain Shirazi, travelled in these areas in disguise. Later, under the British mandate after 1918, it was she, now a widow, with whom the British political officers negotiated. Her personality must have been

Fig. 2. Village aristocracy. Married woman at the garden basin. Barkan.
Fig. 3. Village aristocracy. Married woman making cigarettes. Barkan. (See p. 10).

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

583 114 369 does not mention that the man must pay any bride price. Nor does it quite agree with the information Lane gives about urban conditions among Arabs in Egypt, where he lets the wedding expenses of the bride's family equal the sum paid in bride wealth by the bridegroom, but states that the money expended by the former goes on furniture, clothes and trinkets for the bride, and that all this, called "gahaz", is the bride's personal property, taken with her in the event of divorce[121], whereas he makes no mention of the bride's family presenting any form of gift to the bridegroom and his family.

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585 297 *Wedding preparations.* Of the bride's outfit the satin quilt and the quilted coats are made by male craftsmen in the bazar. On the other hand a seamstress came to the home where, under the supervision of the women in the family, she cuts out kirtles, long baggy trousers and jackets from the silk, muslin and brocade purchased in Baghdad and Sulaimani. When the material was cut out, the bride's step-mother, thus a married woman, brought a large piece of loaf sugar which, with a sugar hammer, was smashed and strewn over the material. This was said to bring good luck.

[777] The same seamstress cut out of a roll of English grey the shirts of genuine Kurdish form and the drawers given by the bride's family to male relatives of the bridegroom. The seamstress then rolled the pieces of material together, and left to sew them in her own home.

585 302 515 The day before the wedding in my interpreter's home at Sulaimani a woman arrived in order to remove all superfluous hair from the bride's body, whilst the bride herself removed the pubic hairs during a triple steam bath in the house's bathroom. Whereas an unmarried Kurdish girls, as with the Arabs, never shaves or removes hair from her body in other ways, she must from the time of marriage keep her body free of hair[122]. Hairs are plucked out or removed by smearing on a paste, the composition of which I was unable to discover. Dickson mentions a depilatory of this kind with the Badawi, a solution of zinc and arsenic[123] used by the well-to-do, whilst other women pluck out the hair with their fingers. Lane states that in Egypt women use a kind of resin called "filuo shkeer", which is smeared on in a melted state, whereas other women pluck the hairs out "after merely rubbing the part with ashes of charcoal"[124]. At another place Lane[125] refers to a depilatory, "noorah", composed of quicklime mixed with about one eight part of orpiment. This powder is stirred in water to a paste that is smeared on, loosening the hairs in two minutes, after which it is washed off.

[305] This removal of hair in my interpreter's family thus took place in the home with the help of an expert, and not, as reported by Granqvist about the Palestinian Arabs, in the public bath[126]. It was said that the bridegroom went through a similar process[127].

585 291 197 In the bride's home this form of beauty treatment in connexion with the marriage was of great interest to all the women there. This went so far that an aunt of the bride grasped her by the legs as she sat tailor-fashion in the courtyard, and attempted to overturn her in order to satisfy herself that the pubic hairs had been duly removed. It was possible to determine this as the bride that evening was not wearing Kurdish-woman's costume with wide baggy trousers, but a long, pink nightgown with puffed sleeves—a European phenomenon adopted into the Kurdish dress scheme, worn with a little jacket but without long trousers. Apart from this episode, which must be considered an indication

834 of the extent to which a wedding, down to the last detail, is a family and not a private affair, Kurdi

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

were exceedingly modest. Modesty, on the other hand, was of a type different from what we are accustomed to in our pattern of behaviour.

They felt dislike at displaying the naked body. All changing of clothes during the day among women took place in a squatting position without the body at any time being uncovered. An elsewhere European summer dress in which the daughter of the Sheikh of Topzawa had wanted to be photographed caused her to break off the sitting and to dash into the dark cookhouse in the courtyard, where she sat hunched up in the corner with her naked arms slung protectively around her bare legs, when two peasant women from the village, fetching water, happened to pass the gate to the courtyard. In the urban milieu, when my interpreter and I took a steam bath together in the bathroom, she always kept her hand covering her lap when the sitting position on the small wooden stools whilst being doused was not sufficiently concealing.

On the other hand shyness did not apply when relieving nature. This took place collectively and in the presence of other women fetching water from the basin, where water was available for the subsequent washing, whether in the garden basin of the sheikh's houses at Topzawa and Serkan, at the more private well-like shaft in the courtyard of the Sheikh's house at Sargala, or at one of the big public washing basins for women in the villages. This was done discreetly sheltered by the amplenese of women's costumes, but was not a private but a joint undertaking, in which solitude and peace was neither sought nor expected.

The wedding. Lane[139] says that Arabs have a special preference for Mondays and Fridays for the celebration of weddings—that is to say the day on which the bride is handed over to the bridegroom—whereas, according to Hanglo[139], the Turk-stamped Bosnian Muslims favour Sundays and Thursdays.

To judge by the four wedding feasts I had an opportunity of witnessing, wholly or in part, in Southern Kurdistan, the Kurds appear to follow the Turks in this matter. In the villages the two weddings took place on Sundays (16 June and 14 July, 1957), the third on a Wednesday (22 May, 1957), whilst the one wedding I was present at at Sulaimani was celebrated on a Thursday (8 August, 1957). Later my interpreter informed me by letter of her brother's wedding, which took place on a Monday (25 August, 1958). No rule can be discerned from such sparse material, merely the negative one that the Arab predilection for Friday—the most important day of the week for Islam—as the day for the handing over of the bride does not apply in the case of the Kurds. The weddings I witnessed in Topzawa and its neighbouring village, Rakawa, took place in a humble village milieu. The upper class village milieu wedding was not celebrated during my stay in Southern Kurdistan.

At two of the three village weddings I was able to observe the men's rule in the festivities, at the third the women's. In all three cases, however, I was in the bridegroom's home to which the bride was brought. In none of the cases did I have an opportunity to see what went on in the bride's home.

The fetching of the bride, fell, who all came from outside, was a matter for the men[140]. At 6 in the morning a cortège of hired cars filled with men left the village for the bride's residence. Among the men, most of those in the village, was the bridegroom's father, but not the bridegroom, who

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

entered the institution which, so far as I could understand, hardly ranked higher than our poorhouses of former days.

The ritual fast in the month of *ramaḍān* began in 1957 on April 2d. The thirty days during which the orthodox Muslim, whether man or woman, must refrain from eating food, solid or liquid, from tobacco, and from all sexual intercourse, from such time in the morning as it is possible to distinguish between a white and a black thread until sundown, I did not experience during my four months stay in Southern Kurdistan. Nor did I witness the concluding festival day, and the following six days, during which women who have had their menstruation period during the fast month and as a result of this condition of impurity were unable to comply with the fast, can rectify this omission.

On the other hand I did see a woman fasting on her own for a day's a result of a promise to do so[ᵐ], believing that by so doing she would bring good fortune to others. The day was July 30th, which, in 1957, corresponded to the first day in the month of pilgrimage. The fasting woman was the wife of the sheikh at Sargalu. I noticed that although she abstained from eating, drinking and smoking the whole of a long, hot day, the temperature reaching 122°F., where abstention from drinking, particularly, demanded an inhuman strength of will and self control, she attended to her domestic duties, which consisted, among other things, in milking goats, cooking and serving meals to a numerous family. Her fast was due to a promise given in connexion with the participation of a relative in a pilgrimage to Mecca, the centre and holy city of the Islamic world, a long, expensive and still risky journey.

We have now reached the fifth and last pillar of Islam, the pilgrimage, in the 12th lunar month. The Coran says in Sure 3, verse 97, that "pilgrimage to the House is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can find a way thither". Out of the four feminine informants I experienced in Kurdistan, the only women I met who had undertaken a pilgrimage came from the uneducated urban milieu. Of these there were several. In a joint family that owned various lorries in the city and several large cars that were hired out, a woman, her husband and an 8 year old daughter had the year before taken part in a pilgrimage by plane Damascus-Jidda, and two other women in the same family group had made the journey with other pilgrims.

The most complete information about the pilgrimage was obtained from two women of about the same age who were married to the same business man in Kirkuk. Each had been a member of a group of pilgrims, one going the one year and the other the next. The one had taken a plane via Damascus to Jidda, whilst the other had gone by bus across the Syrian desert to Beirut, and then by ship through the Suez Canal to Jeddah. In the latter case the journey had taken about two months and had cost about 200 Din. (say £200)[ᵍ].

9 In the same way that the returned male pilgrims mark the greater experience of their lives and their changed position in society by a white head-dress, so Kurdish women must observe certain sartorial rules after a pilgrimage. Even among women the head must never again be bared. The light head veil, *sāyāl*, must be worn even in the closest family circle, where other women are allowed to dispense with it. The arm, from elbow to hand, must never be shown naked which is